

Stated Meeting, November 20, 1891.

Present, 26 members.

President, Mr. FRALEY, in the Chair.

On motion of Mr. Dudley, it was

Resolved, nem. con., That the ordinary business of the Society should be suspended, and that such matters as were set for this evening should be postponed until the next regular meeting, and that the only business that should be attended to to-night, should be the reading of a paper by Mr. Henry C. Baird, on "Carey and Two of His Recent Critics—Boehm-Bawerk and Marshall," and the presentation of the portrait of Mrs. Seiler.

Mr. Henry Carey Baird read a paper on "Carey and His Recent Critics."

Mr. Rosengarten read the following letter :

FREDERICK FRALEY, Esq.,

President American Philosophical Society.

DEAR SIR :—Some of the friends of the late Mrs. Emma Seiler, including many of her pupils, desire to present to the Philosophical Society, of which Mrs. Seiler was a member, a marble relief portrait of that lady, to be placed in your Hall, as a memorial of her scientific labors and of her success in elevating musical education, and of her contributions to a better knowledge of the voice in speaking and singing. You are respectfully asked to request the Philosophical Society at its next meeting to accept this gift, and to fix a time when it can be presented, and a memoir of Mrs. Seiler, be read, to be preserved and printed in the record of the Transactions of the Society.

We are very respectfully, etc.,

Mrs. Caspar Wister,
Mrs. Brinton Coxe,
Miss Rosengarten,
Miss Bradford,
Miss Maria Hopper,
Mrs. Messchert,
Miss Messchert,
Miss Bennett,
Miss Eliza B. Chase,
Mrs. Agnes G. E. Shipley,
Mr. William Ellis Scull,
Mr. M. H. Messchert,
Mr. Charles Platt,

Mrs. S. I. Lesley,
Mrs. Marriott C. Smythe,
Miss Maria Moss,
Mrs. John W. Field,
Miss Ella C. White,
Miss Mary A. Burnham,
Miss Kate S. Gillespie,
Miss B. M. Randolph,
Mrs. George McClellan,
Rev. Dr. T. K. Conrad,
Mr. William Platt Pepper,
Mr. Edward H. Coates,
Mr. J. G. Rosengarten.

Philadelphia, November 4, 1891.

Mr. Rosengarten, presenting the portrait of Mrs. Seiler, spoke as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT:—At the last meeting, the American Philosophical Society agreed to accept a marble relief portrait of the late Madame Seiler, presented by a few of her friends and pupils. I now have the pleasure, on behalf of the subscribers, to present it to you and through you to the Society. Madame Seiler was a member of this Society, one of the six women who have thus far been enrolled on its list. The others were Princess Dashkoff, Mrs. Somerville, Mrs. Agassiz, Miss Maria Mitchell and Miss Helen Abbott. Her works on "The Voice in Singing" and "The Voice in Speaking" were not her only claims to this distinction. In Germany, her native country, Madame Seiler was a pupil of the famous teachers of the University of Berlin, and it is to her that is attributed the first use of the laryngoscope in studying the organs of the throat, while her discovery and description of some of the parts of the throat were of great value. She brought letters of introduction from well-known German savans to the late Dr. George B. Wood, for many years President of this Society, and through him was enabled to make the acquaintance of the Rev. Dr. Furness, among its oldest members. This venerable member of the Philosophical Society helped her in all of her literary work, and was her kind and steadfast friend through all her life; his last act of kindness was officiating at her funeral, when his tender sympathy and earnest words assuaged the grief of her family and her friends. But no patronage and no help would have availed without the talent, energy and ability which won for Madame Seiler hosts of friends here. Her success was shown in the establishment of a singing academy, where many pupils were trained in her methods, and her little leisure was spent in scientific and literary work. Much still remains in manuscript, but her printed books have been freely used and commended by the later writers on the subjects specially her own. As a mark of respect and affection, her friends and pupils have secured this admirable marble relief portrait. It is the work of Mr. Henry K. Bush Brown, a young American artist, and it is now presented to the Philosophical Society, with the request that it may find a suitable place on the walls of its hall, where there are portraits and busts of many of the distinguished men who have been members. What Madame Seiler did to entitle her to this honor will be set forth in detail in a biographical sketch to be read this evening, and that memoir will no doubt be preserved in the growing list of necrological notices in the printed papers of the Society. On behalf of the subscribers this marble relief portrait is presented to the Society as an expression of the affection and admiration felt for Madame Seiler in her lifetime and in the hope of thus perpetuating her name and memory as those of a woman who did much for a scientific knowledge of music and whose general culture, broad sympathies and earnest labors endeared her to all who knew her. Coming to this city almost an entire stranger—not even a master of

the language spoken here—it was the kindness shown to her by members of the Philosophical Society that enabled her to find employment and to show her mastery of her art and to carry on her scientific work and to write her books. It is eminently fitting, therefore, that this memorial portrait should find its final resting place on the walls of your hall, and that her name and services should be perpetuated in your records. I now, in the name and on behalf of the subscribers, hand over to you and through you to the keeping of the Society, the portrait of Madame Seiler, a member of the Society, a woman of many virtues and talents and beloved by a large circle of friends, who have joined in thus testifying their sense of the honor conferred on her by this Society and of her eminent right to it.

The President accepted the portrait in a few appropriate remarks.

Mrs. J. P. Lesley then read the following sketch of Madame Seiler :

Mrs. Emma Seiler was born on the 23d of February, 1821, at Wurtzberg, in the kingdom of Bavaria. Her maiden name was Diruff, and her father was court physician to Ludwig, King of Bavaria, and also Surgeon-General to the kingdom. Emma Diruff had two brothers and two sisters. One of her sisters afterwards married Dr. Canstadt, a celebrated physician and professor at Jena, who also started a medical journal, which is still in existence. Her other sister married Dr. Demme, professor of surgery at Berne, and brother of a distinguished Lutheran clergyman of that name, formerly settled in Philadelphia.

The children of Dr. Diruff were on familiar terms with the young princes and princesses at the court of King Ludwig, and occasionally shared their lessons with the same tutors and professors, and Emma grew up in close intimacy and friendship with the princesses, and with the young Maximilian, and Otto, King of Greece. She lived in the atmosphere of court life, was early presented, and the king and queen valued highly their intercourse with the family of the court physician. To our American ideas these are trifles, but unless we understand all the early influences of a young life, we cannot realize what one must have to overcome in later years when living among people to whom all such distinctions are purely artificial.

Her early youth was a very happy one, devoted to her education, in the heart of a family circle of sufficient wealth to be free from serious anxieties and cares, and their home in the midst of beautiful scenery, for which she had all her life a deep appreciation.

In the year 1841 Emma Diruff was married to Dr. Seiler, a young physician whose family like her own was one of the oldest and most aristocratic in Bavaria. The estate of her husband, to which she at once removed with him, was situated in Langenthal in Switzerland, not far from

Berne. She was then twenty years old. For some years she lived in outward comfort, not called on for serious exertions beyond the cares for her children and the guidance of her family affairs. But in 1846 some speculations in which her husband had engaged failed; all his property except the estate on which they lived was lost, and from this time forth she lived a life of deep and constant anxiety, and under the necessity for unremitting exertion. They both thought that their home on the estate might be made remunerative by turning it into a private asylum for insane patients, and into this work Mrs. Seiler threw herself with the energy and ardor of her nature, making herself the sympathetic friend of those whose mental maladies were of the milder type, and having great influence over the violent. At one time, after watching successfully for some months a case of suicidal mania, the patient escaped her and was found to have hung herself. Mrs. Seiler, after an hour of heroic effort, succeeded in restoring the life that was apparently extinct. At another time, she was badly injured by lifting an insane woman, and carried that injury and the suffering it occasioned to her dying day. But she was never one to dwell upon personal sorrows and pains, or talk about them; nor could she help away her griefs by personal resentment, a poor way for any of us to be helped. But she went on courageously with the work appointed to her, only finding her eyes and her heart more open and sympathetic with her sufferers, and her hands more active.

In the year 1847 a famine came upon Switzerland, not due to failure of crops, but to political causes. The French invaded Switzerland in preparation for the Franco-Austrian War, blockaded all the outlets, and the price of provisions became so high that the very poor had no means to supply their wants. At Langenthal and in many other places, they fell dead in the streets from starvation. Mrs. Seiler's heart ached well-nigh to bursting with the miseries she saw around her—the dead and dying in the streets, the wretchedness of those who survived. Night and day she pondered on their distresses and thought over plans for their relief. But all her plans required money and she had none. One night in her agony she prayed, "Oh, my God, send me power to help my poor dying people! Oh, my God, show me the way!" "I prayed all night upon my knees," she said, "and by daylight my mind was clear."

She rose early, and having attended to her family and her patients, she went to the clergyman of the village, to ask for his sympathy and approval. When she had finished an ardent appeal to him, he said to her in a deep and solemn tone which she was fond of imitating, "Read the Bible to those dying people." And when she said, "But they are starving to death; they must have food," he only repeated mechanically, "Read the Bible to those dying people, every one." When she declined to do this, and rose impatiently to go, he said, in the same sepulchral tone, "When that great day comes when the Judge shall separate the sheep from the goats, where will *you* be?" "That does not concern me at all," said Mrs. Seiler, "whether I shall go with sheeps or goats. I was thinking of some-

thing very different. But you, sir, how shall it be with you in that day? Will you go to sheeps or goats?" There was no answer to this question, and she hurried away to carry out her vision of the night without the aid of the clergyman. "I walked to every comfortable house that I could reach on foot," she said, "and besought them to give me whatever they could spare in food or money." Her eloquence brought a generous response. Then she went through the wretched streets, and invited three hundred to come to her house the next day. She bought materials, and herself prepared large kettles of nourishing broth, and bought huge loaves of bread. Then she lodged and fed them through the day on her own premises. Many lives were saved by this timely aid, but this was but one part of Mrs. Seiler's midnight planning. As soon as the poor lives were enough restored for work she induced them to learn some little handicraft by which to help themselves. She herself understood all the beautiful methods of embroidery and exquisite darning and crocheting, and to these she added braiding of hats and baskets and mats, that she might teach them. The hands so awkward and unskillful at first, soon became expert under her instruction, and even very little children in the end did exquisite work. And now she had a real manufactory of salable articles. Then she sent to many rich persons at a greater distance to come and see. "I was a very handsome woman then" she said with naïve simplicity, "and I thought to myself, I will now make my beauty of some use. So I did send to all my courtiers [she meant admirers] to come and see me, and I made it very agreeable for them, and they did buy all my poor people's work, and that did give me much money, to take in and feed and teach more starving people, and then many young ladies of fine families came to me and said, 'Mrs. Seiler, we will learn all your arts, and then we will come and help you to teach the poor people;' and they did. And so the circle of blessing was extended."*

I cannot close this little history of one brief period of Mrs. Seiler's life without telling you that her methods in this time of her country's needs were so successful and far reaching that the Swiss government and afterwards the Swedish and Danish governments sent emissaries to see them; and so convinced were they of their goodness and practicability that they copied them in their own administration.

Her versatility and energy and physical strength were at this time very great, and her resources unfailing. During the whole period of the famine she had to plan carefully and keep the strictest account of expenses and also arrange new plans to replenish an ever-lessening treasury. So, while teaching the handicrafts, she set about discovering the fine natural voices which she knew must exist among the poor peasants who flocked daily to her estate. Having found fifty or more capable of it, she devoted

* Mrs. Seiler's daughter writes me: "When I was in Germany, I made it a point to ask my mother's brother and sister as well as old friends about her youth, and all agreed that she was not only the handsomest girl in Wurtzburg, and called 'The Rose of Wurtzburg,' but was also beloved by all who knew her."

herself with ardor to the training of a band of choristers, who in time sang the most beautiful music all over the neighborhood ; she gave lovely concerts, and the proceeds enabled her to carry on her pious charity a much longer time.

Much of all this I learned from her own lips, told so incidentally and naturally, one could see that she did not herself appreciate its admirable character. But it was strikingly confirmed to me by a lady from this city who with her husband traveled through that region only a few years ago. In the mountains she met a peasant whom she asked if he had ever known a Mrs. Emma Seiler who once lived there. His face brightened all over as he assured her that he remembered her well, and then he told with enthusiasm the story of her saving the lives of so many of his comrades and the good she had done in many ways to all the people.

Late in August of 1851, the home at Lagenthal was broken up, the private asylum came to an end, and Mrs. Seiler found it necessary to support herself and her children by her talent for music, and she left Switzerland never to return to it as a home.

She went first to Dresden, and there took lessons of Wick, the father of Clara Schumann, with whom she became intimate. She supported herself and her children by giving piano lessons while she was cultivating her voice. But while in training there she lost her voice, a bitter disappointment to her, because she could earn much more by teaching vocal than instrumental music. She remained in Dresden three years, during which time her house was the rendezvous of the principal musical celebrities. She worked hard at her piano lessons, but she did not recover her voice. Then she went to her sister Mrs. Canstadt at Breslau and passed a year giving lessons, and then to Heidelberg. Here she found piano lessons poorly paid; every one wanted singing, and this inspired her to study with zeal the laws of vocal physiology, and the causes of the overstrain which had destroyed her own voice and that of so many others. Here at Heidelberg she became intimate with the two Bunsens, the chemist and the statesman, and also with Kirchhoff, professor of physics. Bunsen the chemist and Kirchhoff together discovered the spectroscope while she was there, which excited all her enthusiasm.

In December, 1856, she met Helmholtz, who was made professor extraordinary of music. He was then engaged in writing his great work on "Sensation in Sound," and went to Mrs. Seiler almost daily for several months for advice and for verification of his calculations by her experiments. After living in Heidelberg nearly six years she went in 1856 to Leipzig to study herself, and to give her children a musical education at the conservatory. Here she knew well Moschelles, Drysholk, and David the violinist, and also the professor of physiology Ernest Heinrich Weber, and with his aid she studied the anatomy and physiology of the voice and published her first book "Old and New in the Art of Singing," which created a profound sensation in musical circles. From Leipzig she went to Berlin. By the care and training she had given herself after she

had discovered the cause of her trouble she recovered her voice, and was now once more able to give lessons in singing. She had the first laryngoscope, invented by Manuel Garcia, constructed after her own directions, and by it she discovered the verification of her theories with regard to the head notes of the female voice. In Berlin too she found herself in a delightful society, meeting often Du Bois Reymond, the Egyptologist Lepsius and many other distinguished companions.

In 1866, finding her means of earning a livelihood almost at an end through the straightened means of the German people during the war, which did not permit many to indulge in the luxury of music, she left Germany and came to Philadelphia. Every movement of her life seems to have been made under the stress of stern necessity. She loved a permanent home, but she accepted these changes, the parting from old friends, the barriers of language, the unaccustomed ways of a new world, with the same sweet patience and simplicity that characterized her life.

I am not competent to speak of her musical career in this city and must leave it to abler minds to do it justice. She brought letters from wise and good men in Europe which at once placed her cause in the best hands. The extracts from the valuable sketches of Charlotte Mulligan and Harriet Hare McClellan, former pupils and friends, which follow my imperfect record, will supply the information I cannot give. From Dr. Furness she had the highest service that devoted friendship could give, since he gave time and personal labor and much care in translating her manuscripts into exquisite English. Her work on "The Voice in Singing" is entirely her own. In the "Voice in Speaking" she had much assistance from her son, Dr. Carl Seiler, in the physiological parts. In establishing her school of vocal music she had the personal assistance and generous backing of many devoted friends.

I may mention here that within two years of her residence in Philadelphia Mrs. Seiler was made a member of the American Philosophical Society, an honor accorded to but six women since its foundation: the Princess Catherine Romanowa d'Aschkow, Mrs. Somerville, Miss Maria Mitchell, Mrs. Emma Seiler, Mrs. Louis Agassiz and Miss Helen Abbot.

I have heard that she was not a good business woman, and I can well believe it. No one has all the gifts. Her monumental work consists in the voices she trained, and in the noble principles of art she inculcated. I am told that the principal strength of her teaching lay in cultivating purity of tone and truthfulness of expression.

Those who think that she overdid the value of technique, would do well to read her fine chapter on "The Esthetic View" in "The Voice in Singing." It was one of her strongest and deepest principles, differing greatly from some modern ideas, that art and genius cannot do the best if divorced from morality. So she despised Wagner's music, and would say indignantly, "He is a man of immoral life; we must not allow that the music of the future can be furnished from such a source." As one of her dear friends said of her to me, "No, Mrs. Seiler could never believe

that a bitter spring could bring forth sweet waters. It was the same with her innocent pure mind in all art," said this same discerning friend. "She could walk about a room full of nude figures with real enjoyment of the exquisite outlines, but let her see a fully veiled figure whose attitude or expression denoted meanness or low tastes and a shudder went through her."

I had not a close intimacy with Mrs. Seiler; she was too much occupied for me to have been willing to take up much of her time; but those who knew her better can easily fill out and correct the only portrait of her that my warm personal friendship allows. She came at intervals an uninvited but most welcome guest to take tea and pass the evening with us; those evenings will never be forgotten.

Her conversation had a rare charm, and was by no means confined to those subjects she would have been supposed to be most interested in. She had an appreciative interest in what each friend had most at heart. The young artist in painting was surprised to encounter in her such sympathy with the humblest efforts, and was charmed with her accounts of the various schools of art in the Old World, and her stories of wonderful paintings and their effects. The scholar and the student found her a delighted and receptive listener to his researches in Archæology or Egyptology; and her personal stories of distinguished scholars whom she had known intimately in Europe lighted up the moments she gave them. Often most amusing in its dramatic characterization of persons and events her conversation was always kindly and could not wound. I must make one exception. There were occasions where she was carried out of herself by her indignation at what she knew or believed to be wickedness. But these occasions were rare. She had in the main a sweet and patient temper as surely as she had a warm and loving heart and a sunny spirit. One remembers far oftener the delicious humor, the innocent childlike mirthfulness with which she would tell of her own adventures and escapades. I recall how, after her first visit to Europe, after she had made a home among us, she came to spend an evening with us, and the glee with which she told us one little incident of her travels. She was in Italy, and I think on the train between Rome and Naples, when some ladies who were attracted by something she said about music to her companion joined in the conversation. In the course of it they mentioned that the Italian government had directed that the works of Mrs. Emma Seiler on the "Voice" (an American lady they called her) should be introduced into all the schools. Do you know her, they asked? She looked reflective. "Yes, I do know that woman quite well indeed," said Mrs. Seiler; "she is a good woman and she knows quite well about the voice; she has studied it long. Ladies, your government [so she pronounced it] has done a very good thing indeed to direct that the books of Mrs. Seiler shall be taught in the schools. I will myself tell her just so soon as I return to America." And she bade them farewell without disclosing her identity.

There is no doubt that she was impulsive and impetuous; those qualities could not have existed apart from the divine energy that accomplished such results. The sources of our virtues are also the sources of our faults. Let it be said that she was sometimes undisciplined in speech, and sometimes misunderstood her friends. We will remember that she came to us Puritans, Quakers, self-restrained people, from a demonstrative and enthusiastic nation of Europe, and that we are quite as likely to have misunderstood her. Let us remember, too, the constant strain and stress of her hard-working life in a profession of all others trying to nerves and spirits. And if she demanded much of others she was harder on herself. After toilsome days she often studied into the small hours of the night to keep herself at the high-water mark of knowledge which she conscientiously exacted of herself.

In 1883 her children induced her to give up a life of such incessant exertion, to close her school of vocal art, to take a trip to Europe for relaxation, and on her return to take only private pupils. Her visit to Europe at this time illuminated the remaining years of her life; everywhere she met with warm friendship and cordial admiration. When she returned, it was to a peaceful home, where loved children and grandchildren could often come to see her, where she received pupils through the day, and lived alone with one faithful, loving German servant to whom she was both friend and mother. It was a quiet, retired but peaceful life. She had always been simple and unworldly, full of humanity and taking delight in small pleasures, such as lie within the reach of all. The companion of princes, the friend of the first statesmen and philosophers, poets and musicians of Europe, the beloved of Clara Schumann and our own Anna Jackson, found joy in making one poor German girl happy and in being made happy by her. "We go to the Park in the hot summer days, Paulina and I; we sit down by the water, and under the trees and hear the birds sing; we look at the children on the flying-horses and we visit the Zoo. In the winter if we are tired or lonesome Paulina and I will go to the opera. Sometimes we do go to see Buffalo Bill, and we laugh and shake all over, and that rests us."

Mrs. Seiler left us on the morning of December 21, 1886, at two o'clock. She had been ill for nearly two weeks, but few persons had known of it, and it was a surprise to nearly every one. She had often said she hoped she might not live beyond the age of sixty-five, and her wish was granted. Her disease was spinal meningitis, and she was unconscious from the beginning of her illness to its close. For her we could ask nothing better. She escaped the languors and disabilities of old age; she never tasted death. At the brief funeral service, I longed to hear some voices of those who had loved her and whom she had trained sing the beautiful hymn, "Oh Spirit freed from Earth."

After her hard-working, self-denying life, crowded with services to her fellow-men, and faithful to the end, she has entered into immortality. For, what Dr. Furness said of her in beautiful words (which I must not

try to quote accurately, but I am sure I caught his idea) is the great truth : What she thought or believed about immortality is of less consequence, than that she lived a life which must keep the soul near to God, here and hereafter.

EXTRACTS FROM A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MADAME EMMA SEILER,
BY CHARLOTTE MULLIGAN.

"The death of Madame Seiler, which occurred in Philadelphia recently, deprives the world of one of the most remarkable women of the century. Every teacher of the voice in America, every student who has made a specialty of the throat and vocal apparatus, knows the value of Madame Seiler's discoveries and her books upon these subjects are the standard authority. 'Not one of us has improved upon her work, with all our efforts,' said Dr. Lennox Browne to us, three years ago, in London, 'and she stands still the peer of the greatest of us all.' In this testimony hundreds of other physicians would agree, and the world of science has long known the importance of her researches, and accorded her an honorable position among its savans. Garcia was the discoverer of the laryngoscope, but Madame Seiler applied it, and followed out a course of study that, when presented to the world, greatly facilitated the efforts of those who were endeavoring to understand the vocal action. 'The greatest living authority upon the voice,' Garcia himself, styled her his friend and colaborer, and the encomium was rightly hers.

* * * * *

"During her early life Madame Seiler became deeply interested in the study of medicine, her father being at that time physician to the court of Bavaria. It was considered almost a sin in that age for a woman to learn anything about the structure of the human frame, and every tendency towards the acquisition of such knowledge was promptly checked. These restrictions greatly hampered the young girl, but she found opportunity to read books from her father's library, and before her marriage had acquired an extensive knowledge. The voice appears always to have interested her particularly, and she was first attracted to the subject by the song of a pet bird. Her own description of the way in which she arranged to see the throat of a human being after death, illustrates the persistency with which she prosecuted her studies. Going to spend some time with an aunt, she made friends with a medical student in the town, and to him confided her desire. He, at the risk of being discovered, procured a throat and took it to the house late one night, when the old aunt had retired. 'Two weeks we worked together,' she said, 'examining the muscles, dissecting them with the greatest care and studying every detail.' This study was always done at night, but the time Madame Seiler counted as most precious to her, for it developed her understanding of a subject that was of the greatest importance, yet not at all familiar even to professional men. For several weeks after this experience her work

was constantly interrupted, and she struggled with many bitter trials. Her mind was not inactive, however, and she formed theories then that later on she demonstrated to be facts. Acoustics to her became a science that offered the greatest possible interest, and she studied the inflections in the cries in birds and beasts until they became a perfect language to her. Falling water, the different sounds in the atmosphere, and the myriad tones from the insect world, all had for her their harmonies or lacked the essentials of perfect tones. She heard in nature what is shut off from ears that are duller than hers, and she lived in a world upon the border of which we can only stand. The human voice, according to Madame Seiler's view, had never yet been developed to accomplish even half of which it was capable. Some of her theories were exemplified in her own case, and up to the last year of her life, she could produce superb tones, that rang and vibrated with wonderful power and beauty. The production of such tones required constant work, but once they were acquired they were well worth the labor and discouragement that attended the study. We have never yet heard a pupil, who had studied with this famous woman, who did not show either in the speaking or singing voice, some of the remarkable qualities that she knew the voice could be made to possess. One of these was richness of tone, a peculiar concentration that demanded attention, and an effect of power combined with sweetness. Madame Seiler possessed it to a remarkable degree, and imparted it to all those who had the intelligence to study with confidence in her great ability. The voice in speech was second only to the voice in song, and she laid great stress upon the care that young children should have when they are beginning to discriminate between sound and noise. No great singer ever came directly from Madame Seiler's care, because she paid most attention to those qualities which tend to make a voice retain its beauty and freshness. When those were acquired, then the accessories were undertaken, but many a pupil tired of the preparation, and other masters built upon her enduring foundation, reaping a glory that never could have been theirs but for her conscientious work. Madame Seiler was also a woman who had lived all her early life among scientific men in Europe who appreciated her mind and made much of her. Her life in this country was one of comparative isolation. She could not understand the lack of reverence and respect with which she came in contact, especially in younger people, and she sought her chief happiness among her books. The end came peacefully, and the bright, gifted woman fell quietly asleep. Her death falls heavily upon many throughout the country, for she had been a great benefactor to hundreds, who, through her instrumentality, have learned the true use of the voice. It is difficult to believe that her work is completed, to realize that all is over, that she is removed forever from this world. As one of the many who knew her value, who appreciated her true nature and wonderful knowledge, we pay a parting tribute as friend and pupil."

EXTRACTS FROM A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MADAME SEILER,
BY HARRIET HARE MCCELLAN.

"In passing from the highest tones of the falsetto register, still higher to the head tones, she was the first to observe a change in the motions of the organ of singing, which she discovered to be due to a sudden closing together of the vocal ligaments to their middle, 'with their fine edges one over the other, leaving free only a third part of the whole glottis immediately under the epiglottis, to the front wall of the larynx.' The foremost part of the glottis formed an oval orifice which with each higher tone seemed to contract more and more, and so became smaller and rounder. It was objected to this result of her observation that such a contraction of the glottis was only possible by means of 'cartilages and muscles,' but that such cartilages and muscles as could render an action of that kind possible were not known. Madame Seiler fully admitted the soundness of this objection, while she was, after repeated trials, more and more convinced of the correctness of her own observation; so she began anew to study the anatomy of the larynx in dissected subjects and was rewarded by finding within the membranes of the vocal ligaments certain fibres of muscle which she called the aryteno-thyroid interna, and which have also been found by other observers. They consist of muscular fibres, sometimes finer, sometimes thicker, and are often described in recent works on laryngoscopy as continuations or parts of one of the principal muscles of the larynx, but her chief discovery was of certain small cuniform cartilages within the membranes of the vocal ligaments, and reaching from their junction with the arytenoid cartilages to the middle of the ligaments. She states that she found these always in the female larynx, and that they undeniably work the shutting part of the glottis, but as they are only now and then fully formed in the male larynx, it follows plainly that only a few male voices are capable of producing the head tones. She adds that observation in the microscope revealed in those larynxes in which the cuniform cartilages were wanting, parts of a cartilaginous mass or the rudiments of a cartilage in the place indicated, and accounts for the cartilages not having been discovered earlier, by the fact that the male larynx was most commonly used by anatomists for investigation, as its muscles are more powerful and its cartilages firmer than in the female larynx.

"Thus she proved her point, and better still she succeeded, by patient effort and persevering practice, of which she was unsparing now that she had discovered the cause of her inability to sing [the attempt to carry upward the throat tones beyond their proper limit] in once more recovering her voice. Certainly if proof were demanded of the truth of her theory, or the practical value of her method, it need be sought no further than in the fact of her having succeeded so completely in the restoration of her own voice, a task recognized by all singing teachers as infinitely more difficult than the original training of an untried organ. At last she who understood the art of singing could sing again—and a glad song she sang!

“She has spoken for herself as to this portion of her experience and it seems most appropriate to quote her own words:

“ ‘As I had had for many years the best teaching, both German and Italian, in the art of singing, and had often sung with favor in concerts, I was led to believe myself qualified to become a teacher of this art, but I had hardly undertaken the office before I felt that while I was able to teach my pupils to execute pieces of music with tolerable accuracy and with the appropriate expression, I was wanting in the knowledge of any sure starting point, any sound principle from which to proceed in the special culture of any individual voice. In order to obtain the knowledge which thus appeared to be requisite in a teacher of vocal music, I examined the best schools of singing, and when I learned nothing from them that I did not already know, I sought the most celebrated teachers of singing, to learn what was wanting; but what one teacher announced to me as a rule was usually rejected by another. Every teacher had his own peculiar system of instruction. No one could give me any definite reason therefor, and the best assured me that so exact a method as I sought did not exist, and that every teacher must find his own way through his own experience. In such a state of darkness and uncertainty to undertake to instruct others appeared to me a manifest wrong, for in no branch of instruction can the ignorance of the teacher do greater injury than in the teaching of vocal music. This I unhappily learned from my own personal experience when under the tuition of a most eminent teacher I entirely lost my voice, whereby the embarrassment I was under, so far from being diminished, was only increased. After this misfortune, I studied under Frederick Wiek, in Dresden (the father and instructor of Clara Schumann), in order to become a teacher on the piano, but while I thus devoted myself to this branch of teaching exclusively, it became from that time the aim and the effort of my life to obtain such a knowledge of the human voice as is indispensable to a natural and healthy development of its beautiful powers.

“ ‘I availed myself of every opportunity to hear Jenny Lind, who was then dwelling in Dresden, and to learn all that I could from her. I likewise hoped from a protracted abode in Italy, the land of song, to obtain the fulfillment of my wishes, but beyond certain practical advantages, I gathered there no sure or radical knowledge.

“ ‘In the French method of instruction, now so popular (1868), I found the same superficiality and uncertainty that existed everywhere else. But the more deeply I was impressed with this state of things, and the more fully I became aware of the injurious and trying consequences of the method of teaching followed at the present day, the more earnestly was I impelled to press onward in search of light and clearness in this dim domain.

“ ‘Convinced that only by the way of scientific investigation the desired end could be reached, I sought the counsel of Prof. Helmholtz, in Heidelberg. This distinguished man was then engaged in a scientific

inquiry into the natural laws lying at the basis of musical sounds. Prof. Helmholtz permitted me to take part in his investigations, and at his kind suggestion I attempted by myself, by means of the laryngoscope, to observe the physiological processes that go on in the larynx during the production of different tones. My special thanks are due to him that now, with a more thorough knowledge of the human voice, I can give instruction in singing without the fear of doing any injury.' "

Mr. Rosengarten presented to the Society the laryngoscope used by Mrs. Seiler, *which was stated to be the first ever used in America*. At the conclusion of the memoir, the President invited those present to a light collation that had been prepared.

And the Society was adjourned by the President.

Stated Meeting, December 4, 1891.

Present, 11 members.

Mr. RICHARD VAUX in the Chair.

Correspondence was submitted as follows :

A letter of acceptance of membership from Prof. George Forbes, London, November 1, 1891.

A letter from the Coast and Geodetic Survey Office, Washington, D. C., asking for exchanges, which request was granted.

The following were ordered to be placed on the Proceedings Exchange List :

Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, Conn. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Lincoln, Neb. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, College Park, Md. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Auburn, Ala. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Starkville, Miss. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Fayetteville, Ark. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Laramie, Wyo. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Providence, R. I. ; Agricultural Experiment Station, Tucson, Ariz. ; Agricultural Experiment Sta-